

Roasted Beet Dinner Salad

Tonight we'll feature the miraculous beet, While they're at the peak of the season. For additional texture, we'll surround them with an ensemble of lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, tree-ripened apple, plant-based tenders and toasted walnuts.

Beets, a root vegetable food source, originated in the Mediterranean and dates back to prehistoric times. High in antioxidants, beets were often used for medicinal purposes, but by the 18th century they became a popular food item.

If you haven't already roasted beets, roast some during the day today. A note of caution, beet juice has been used as a natural dye (even a hair dye) for centuries, so be sure to wear latex gloves as you handle the cooked beets.

Preparation time: 30 minutes (after beets are roasted) - Servings: 2

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients on small plates or in bowls. Dinner salads are easy to assemble when you're well organized. You'll perform two preps of onion today. 3 thin slices sweet onion for the salad, and 3 slices chopped onion for the Honey/Mustard Dressing.

Roasted Beet Salad

- 2 medium-size beets (roasted)
- 2 C. baby spinach leaves (washed)
- 4-6 leaves of red or green leaf lettuce (washed)
- 3 thin slices sweet onion (slices halved)
- 1 C. Napa cabbage (thinly sliced)
- 1 C. cucumber (coarsely chopped)
- 1/2 C. red bell pepper (thin-sliced)
- 10 cherry tomatoes (halved)

- 1 tart apple (cored and chopped)
- 8 walnut halves (toasted)
- roasted beets (above - peeled and sliced)
- 2 tsp. crumbled feta cheese
- 2 artisan rolls or thick slices of buttered toast

Plant-based Choice or Chicken Option

Plant-based Choice

4 Chickenless tenders

- or -

Optional Chicken:

1_tsp. olive oil

1 boneless, skinless chicken breast

1/2 C. white wine

Honey/Mustard Dressing

- 1 clove of garlic (peeled)
- 3 thin slices sweet onion (chopped)
- 3 tsp. prepared mustard
- pinch of salt
- 3 tsp. honey
- 1/4 C. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 T. rice wine vinegar
- 1/3 C. low-sodium vegetable broth

Preheat oven to
375°

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Once beets are roasted you're ready to rock and roll. *

Toast walnuts while baking the tenders. Just set the walnut halves in the oven with the tenders for the final 5 minutes of cooking. Turn them once.

Use the warm oven for heating the rolls.

Plant-based Choice or Chicken Option

Plant-based Choice

Cook 4 chickenless tenders in preheated 375° oven, for 15 minutes. Turn after 8 minutes.

Let cool and thin slice. (See above for toasting the walnuts.)

- or -

Chicken Option:

Brown chicken breast in oil and then add 1/2 C. white wine to pan. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook 5 minutes per side. Remove from heat. Season with a little salt and pepper. When cool enough to handle, thin slice.

Roasted Beet Salad/Bread

1. Create a bed of washed greens on large plates.
2. Divide all prepped vegetables, except beets, evenly over top of greens.
3. Distribute chopped apple over salads.
4. Divide sliced tenders (*or chicken*) and walnuts between salads.
5. Put on some latex gloves and peel and slice beets. Arrange over top of salads.
6. Top with feta cheese.
7. Warm some rolls or make toast.

Honey/Mustard Dressing/Plate

Salad Dressing:

Blend all dressing ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Pour into a serving pitcher.

Plate the Meal:

Assemble salad as indicated above and place on table with the pitcher of dressing. Allow diners to dress their own salads. Serve with warm rolls or toast on the side.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

* When roasting beets, I will often put a small ramekin filled with water in the baking dish with the beets. The container of water slowly evaporates in the covered baking dish and provides a fair amount of moisture during the roasting process.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com